

our enemies. In fact, one in 32 mariners serving aboard merchant ships in the Second World War died in the line of duty, suffering a greater percentage of war-related deaths than all other U.S. services.

Since that time, the U.S. Merchant Marine has continued to serve our nation, promoting freedom and meeting the high ideals of its past members. It is fitting to honor the past and present members of the U.S. Merchant Marine. This is why I introduced legislation in the previous Congress that would provide additional federal funding for the memorial wall in San Pedro. Twice the House has approved legislation authorizing funds for this worthy memorial, today I am pleased that the House and Senate are moving to approve this authorization in the port security conference report.

Throughout the development of the conference report, I have sought to provide the greater protection for ports and the communities that surround them against terrorist attacks. I am pleased that the conferees have included port security grants and research and development grants that will encourage the development and use of state-of-the-art technology. Like the conferees, I believe it is important to encourage the private sector to continually advance the state of the art as a means of enhancing detection capabilities and thus enhancing deterrence over time.

When he is reviewing project proposals and awarding grants, I encourage the Secretary of Transportation to give preference to those projects that incorporate technologies that are capable of automatically detecting shielded nuclear weapons, liquid and other explosives, and chemical and biological agents weapons in fully loaded cargo containers without the need for humans to open the containers to manually inspect them. Based on testimony received by the Congress, it would appear that pulsed fast neutron technology is capable today of meeting this need. As a result, I hope that this technology and other technologies will be identified, developed, and installed in our ports as part of the ongoing process of enhancing port security through this legislation.

Long Beach State's Center for the Commercial Deployment of Transportation Technologies (CCDoTT) has been developing maritime technology for many years, and has recently turned their attention to port security technology as well. In the FY03 Defense Appropriations bill CCDoTT was granted \$4.3 million for continuation of their important work to develop more efficient cargo handling in ports, high-speed ship designs, and port security research. This funding will allow the center to continue assessing cargo inspection technologies that can help meet the needs of agencies such as the U.S. Customs Service and the Coast Guard.

Section 70107 of the accompanying report authorizes an additional \$15 million for fiscal years 2003 through 2008 for research and development grants for port security. I am pleased that report language for the Port and Maritime Security Act of 2002 particularly notes the importance of the research being done at Long Beach State's Center for the Commercial Deployment of Transportation Technologies. This language encourages the Secretary of Transportation and the Secretary of Defense to obligate any current and prior year appropriations under the continuing cooperative agreement. The Center is sponsored by the U.S. Maritime Administration and U.S.

Department of Defense and I am certain it will continue to provide invaluable research for America's maritime interests. Again, I am pleased with, and strongly support, this timely port security legislation.

PROJECT 19

HON. MARY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 19, 2002

Mrs. BONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the brave American civilians who volunteered to assist our allies in the fight against an enemy that was threatening democracy for the entire world. These patriotic Americans chose to enter World War II to participate in a mission referred to as Project 19.

In the fall of 1941, prior to the attack on Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt met with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to discuss the United States assisting Britain in its battle with Hitler's Reich.

President Roosevelt responded by authorizing a secret Air Depot to be established and operated by American civilian volunteers in Eritrea, East Africa under the direction of Douglas Aircraft Company. Due to the fact that the U.S. had not yet entered the war and for obvious diplomatic reasons, Project 19 was classified as "secret."

The goal of the volunteers, also referred to as "Tech Reps" and "Feather Merchants," was to assemble P-40's and repair hundreds of worn out and damaged allied aircraft, first for the Royal Air Force (RAF), and after America entered the conflict, B-24's and B-17's for the United States Army Air Corps. When this group of freedom loving Americans first began their volunteer mission, they helped the RAF repair planes that had been damaged during horrific battles. When the secret mission was terminated, many volunteers joined the military to fight alongside our allies and some of them gave the ultimate sacrifice, their lives.

Many lives have been affected by the sacrifice these valiant men made and I believe the time has come to recognize these heroes who volunteered their services and their lives to their country and its allies.

Mr. Speaker, as long as our Nation is served by men and women who place the defense of freedom above their personal safety and well being our Nation will endure. The men of Project 19 served with pride and distinction, and deserve the recognition of our Nation and this Congress.

THANKING MY CONGRESSIONAL STAFF

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 19, 2002

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, the end of a congressional career brings about many emotions. Over the last twenty years I have happily spent representing the fine people of the 17th Congressional District of Pennsylvania I have had the pleasure of working with thousands of constituents, local, state and federal officials, and many former and current distin-

guished members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. To all of them I say, thanks for working with me towards a better America.

And, of course, every Member of Congress works with many, many competent staff, from the staff in their own personal offices to the Committee and Subcommittee staff and the leadership and floor staff. It has often been said that without staff where would this institution be? And I concur with that statement, for without the many fine staff with whom I have had good fortune to work, I and other Members of Congress of the United States would be far worse off. While I cannot mention all the fine staff who have worked with me over the years, let me at least mention the current personal and subcommittee staffers who have endeavored to achieve our common goals and to whom I give my hearty thanks and wish them well in their future careers.

In my Harrisburg district office, Arlene Eckels, my long-time personal secretary who has worked for me since the early days in the Pennsylvania State Senate and to whom I wish a happy and much deserved retirement; Tom Templeton, my hardworking district director, who so ably kept my entire district staff working smoothly; Suzanne Stoll, an old friend and superb caseworker; Paul Giannaris, whose ability to handle INS problems has made him invaluable; and Tim Vollrath, a recently returned former employee whose military and veterans help has been superb. In our Lebanon Office, Reg Nyman has been the voice of Lebanon for these many years, and his excellent knowledge and service will be missed. And in our Elizabethtown office, Susan Melendez has kept our Lancaster County constituents well served by her kind and efficient manner. Over the last twenty years my district office staff has handled hundreds of thousands of phone calls and constituent casework requests. A superb record by a superb staff.

My Washington office staff have proven themselves time and time again, regularly going beyond the call of duty. (The tally of my hundreds of legislative measures, nearly 30 Public Laws, thousands of office meetings and countless committee and other initiatives over the years speaks truth to that assertion.) First, on my personal staff, Patrick Sheehan, my Counsel and Legislative Director, has been a dynamic and intelligent thinker and leader, who offered sage advice on immigration, military and veterans affairs; Greg Herman, my Senior Legislative Counsel kept pace with my many Judiciary and legislative demands especially bankruptcy reform and appropriations (as I would expect from a Palmyra, PA native); Becky Smith, my office manager and health legislative assistant, kept my schedule and personal affairs humming along smoothly and ably managed my most favorite of projects, the Congressional Biomedical Research Caucus of which I was founder and Co-Chairman; David Greineder, who did a multitude of duties as my talented systems manager, legislative correspondent and Legislative Assistant covering education and labor issues; Bill Tighe, another LC and Legislative Assistant whose insights into the Agriculture and Natural Resources needs of Pennsylvania and the district were more than invaluable, they were accurate; Mike Shields, my recent press secretary extraordinaire, who did an excellent job under difficult situations; and, of course, Alan